

Jesus Christ: The Absolute Way to Heaven

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Date: 15 November 2015

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[0 : 00] By God's help and grace, let us again turn from the portion we have read, John chapter 14, and especially verse 6.

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except by me.

Let me start by telling an illustration. There are some religious groups in Nepal and India who try to fit all religions into one box.

Their religious symbol is a dazzling circle, and around the circle there are figures of gods and prophets of all major religions.

In the center of that circle there is a supreme soul from which rays of light beams out, showing that the supreme deity sent his prophets or gods in every age.

[1 : 14] So one light radiating to Buddha, other light radiating to Moses symbolizing Judaism, other light to Guru Nanak, and other to Confucius, other to Prophet Muhammad, and still other to Jesus Christ, and so on.

So they claim all faith leads to one supreme God. Whether you follow Hinduism, or Buddhism, or Islam, or Christianity, they take you to heaven.

According to them, there are many ways to God, not only one exclusive way. However, the claim of Jesus undercut this view.

Jesus claimed to be the only way to the Father, and without Him, no one goes to heaven. He is not our way.

He is the way. And there is no other alternative way. And this is to say, God cannot be found and accessed without coming to Jesus.

[2 : 29] First, coming to Jesus, God cannot be accessed, because God revealed in Jesus the full and final revelation. Jesus is the embodiment of the revelation of the Father, in full and in final.

That's why there is no other way. The context of John 14 is this. Jesus' disciples are facing a series of trauma, disturbance.

They were disturbed because their Lord and teacher is leaving them behind and going to a place where they don't know about. In the previous chapter, if you see, they have heard, Jesus has told them that one of them is going to betray Him, and another one is going to deny Him three times.

More than that, very soon they are going to see their Lord and teacher being flogged, beaten, mocked, and eventually crucified like a criminal.

And this is why Jesus comforts them in advance so that their faith might not be weakened when they see the horrible things done to their Lord and their teacher.

[3 : 52] So He comforts them by promising a glorious reality of heaven in the midst of chaos and confusion. He said, Let your hearts not be troubled.

You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself that where I am, you may be also.

This is very interesting because Jesus drew an analogy of Jewish wedding. So you cannot understand, we cannot understand what Jesus is saying until we understand the Jewish wedding, Jewish marriage.

In order to understand the full significance of what Jesus is saying, we have to understand Jewish custom of marriage. So let me tell you what happens in Jewish wedding.

[5 : 03] A major step in Jewish wedding is betrothal. Betrothal involves the establishment of a marriage covenant in which the prospective bride bridegroom would take the initiative.

The prospective prospective bridegroom travels from his father's house, notice, his father's house to the home of the prospective bride.

He then negotiates with the father of the young woman to determine the price he must pay to purchase his bride. After the price is paid, the marriage covenant is established and the man and the woman are regarded to be husband and wife.

From that moment, the bride is declared as consecrated or set apart exclusively for her bridegroom. After the betrothal ceremony, the groom then leaves the bride's house and returns to his father's house.

Remember again, father's house. He would remain there for a period of 12 months and the groom prepares the living accommodation in his father's house to dwell with his bride after the marriage while the bride prepares herself to gather her thruster and to prepare for married life.

[6 : 29] And at the end of the separation, the bridegroom comes to take his bride to his home and they live together. So this is what happens in Jewish custom of marriage.

So in the light of this analogy, we can easily understand what Jesus is saying here. We know the church is the bride of Christ and Jesus himself is her bridegroom who was in his father's house.

We know that Jesus before he came to earth, he was in his father's house in heaven and just as the bridegroom left his father's house and traveled to the home of his bride, Jesus left heaven and he came down to earth in order to establish a marriage covenant.

Jesus instituted the marriage covenant with his bride on the same night of John 14. And Jesus said like this, The cup is the new covenant in my blood.

This is actually Paul saying, but it is what Jesus said. The cup is the new covenant in my blood. This shows that the purchase price Christ paid to purchase his bride was his own life blood, not money.

[7 : 56] In 1 Corinthians 6, 19-20, Paul draws the same analogy and he says like this, he is referring to the church of Corinth.

He says like this, You are not your own for you were bought with a price. You are not your own for you were bought with a price.

So glorify God in your body. So Christ established the marriage covenant with his bride and the church is set apart exclusively for Christ because she is betrothed to her husband.

And the context of John 14 is about the time of bridegroom departure to his father's house and he will prepare a place.

He goes to his father's house in order to prepare a place and then one day he will come back to take his bride home so that they could live there forever.

[9 : 00] So Jesus is returning to his father's house but not in excitement but he is going to return to his father via the shame of the cross.

In John's gospel the greatest glory is revealed through the shame of the cross. And if you read Martin Luther's *The Doctrine of the Cross* Martin Luther said on Mount Sinai Moses did not see full glory he only saw the part glory of God and the full glory was revealed on the cross.

in the shame of the cross the full glory was revealed and what Moses saw was an afterglow of the cross actually.

So it is his death Jesus' death that will prepare the way to heaven and one day he will come back and resurrect his disciples from the death and then take to himself them to himself and where he is they shall be also.

So Jesus is here explicitly referring referring to the second coming where the believers will not only not only be with the Lord in spirit but they they will also be with the Lord in their glorious body and then they will leave with Christ forever and ever and we see this in the book of Revelation the bride has been prepared for his bridegroom and one day he will come and he will take us home.

[10 : 43] By this stage the disciples should have known the way where Jesus is going. In the previous chapter Jesus had so many times revealed to them the fact that Jesus is going to the Father from where he came from and he assumed that the disciples would know this fact but they actually did not know they were slow learners and they didn't know the destination and the mission of Christ and this is why Thomas interrupted saying Lord we do not know where you are going how can we know the way like other disciples Thomas cannot bear the traumatic pain of Jesus is living he might have believed that Jesus the Christ the Messiah will redeem Israel from the bondage of bondage or tyranny of Romans you know that Romans were occupying

Israel that time and they hoped that the Messiah will come and he will redeem Israel and you know in book of Acts and in gospel that the disciples were on the way to Emmaus they were hoping that they were hoping Jesus will redeem them but Jesus' death has brought them trauma and pain he might have thought the master so the Christ's departure means for Thomas and other disciples that their expectation and hope are falling and coming to an end he might have thought that Thomas might have thought that the master was deserting them for another place on earth and remember this is what the Pharisees and the Jews said to Jesus in John chapter 7 verse 35 the Jews said like this to one another they talked like this one another where does this man intend to go they where does this man intend to go that we will not find him does he intend to go to the dispersion among the

Greeks and teach the Greeks Jesus told them to the Jews that he was going to the father and they misunderstood and here Thomas exactly repeated the same mistake he thought Jesus was going somewhere on earth but in order to clear Thomas's doubt Jesus made this marvelous statement I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the father but by me Jesus is claiming to be the only way to the father through whom they must draw near to God Jesus is not one of the ways of many as some Hindu groups claim but he is the way Jesus is the way because he is the truth and the life there is a

Hindu God namely Krishna who is believed to be one of the ways to the supreme deity according to that dazzling circle battle he claimed to be the way to the supreme God falls apart because he lied many times and he tricked falsely to win the battle so he is false in order to be the way one also has to be the truth likewise the prophet Muhammad can't be the way to God you know that ISIS and other radical Muslim groups are claiming that they follow prophet Muhammad and the Quran and we know what happened in France about 130 people were killed and they claim they directly claim that they follow prophet Muhammad and Quran and the world knows what they are doing is absolutely evil that is against the truth so

Muhammad does not qualify to be the way either because the truth did not dwell in him on the other hand Jesus is the truth and the life he neither lied like Krishna nor thought violence like Muhammad did but he spoke truth and loved peace that's why Jesus is called the prince of peace and this was John 18 verse 18 and John chapter 18 verse 35 will prove this you know the conversation between Pontius Pilate and Jesus Pontius Pilate asked Jesus like this so you are a king and Jesus answered like this you say that I am a king for this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world and notice this to bear witness to the truth everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice in other words

[16:15] Jesus is saying I am the epitome of truth I am the embodiment and the personification of truth I am the incarnation of truth and Jesus is the source of life life in John's gospel virtually means eternal life so he is also the embodiment of life because every life comes from him he is the source of life he is the source of immortality and this we see in John 11 verse 25 Jesus said I am the resurrection and the life whoever believes in me though he dies yet shall he live Jesus is the source of life he can resurrect people and give life he is the life so Christ claimed that he is the embodiment of the truth and the life and those perfectly qualifies him to be the absolute way for his disciple to attain the dwelling place in his father's house

Jesus is the way because he is the truth and the life Jesus said that there are many rooms in heaven these rooms have been prepared for the redeemed sinners before the foundation of the earth but the problem is the door of heaven is shut tightly and Jesus is going to open this door of salvation but that will cost his life every Jewish child is thought from his childhood that God is found in the Israel's temple despite God's real dwelling place is heaven and the temple is said to be a shadow of the real dwelling place of God that is the heaven this we see from the garden of Eden the garden of Eden and the

Jewish temple have many similarities I will give you some the entrance of the Eden and the temple are on the east side and there were two cherubim place and we see there were two cherubims on the Ark of the covenant Adam and Eve were told to guard or till Eden the garden and if you know the Hebrew the same word was used when God told the priest to guard the temple from defilement so Eden was in reality the first temple of God where he dwelt where he walked to and fro but the fall has disrupted the communion between God and man as a result they were expelled from the garden and the cherubims and the flashing flaming swords were put to keep man out from the garden like Eden the holy of holies of the temple was inaccessible to people but

God is so merciful that he granted an access to the high priest once a year to atone sin of the nation of Israel only once a year one person can enter into the holy of holies but without not without blood he has to take blood to atone for his sins and to the sins of Israel for the sins of Israel remember the high priest enter into the holy of holies on the day of atonement and sprinkle blood seven times the number of perfection on the mercy seat that is on the ark of the covenant and we know that in the ark of the covenant there were two tablets the covenant the mosaic tablet the law of Moses two tablets given by God and when the priest would sprinkle blood on the mercy seat what happened was

God is angry because we have broken his ten commandment and the ten commandment is a substance and the summary of whole law of Moses and the people have broken ten commandments so God who dwells on the cherubims is angry with his people but when the high priest entered to the holy of holies he sprinkled blood seven times and that means God the guilt has been covered God doesn't the guilt the breaking of the commandment has been covered from the sight of God and that's why in Hebrew they don't call the day of atonement what they call was the day of covering because their sins was covered from the sight of the Lord and that is the significance of the day of atonement however according to the epistle to the Hebrews the temple and its rituals are just a shadow of the heavenly temple that is the reality and the blood of animal was pointing forward to the blood of

[21 : 50] Christ which he poured on the cross the author to the Hebrews said that Christ went into the holy of holies not in the shadow but in reality itself by taking his own blood remember the blood is a purchase price to purchase Christ bride that is the church and he sprinkled under mercy seat and God and appeased God God's righteous anger once for all so Christ appeared there as our substitution and representation this representative and claim a right of entry for his people in other word Christ the pioneer or the captain of our salvation went ahead of us and removed all barriers that sin made between God and man so that was what happening Christ when he when he when he did not go to the physical temple but he went to the reality heaven and he appeased

God thoroughly because he covered the guilt the covenant we have broken he covered it from the sight of God and that covering resulted God being propitiated or God's wrath was calmed down in light in light in light of this notice the word the way ok notice the word the way in Hebrews chapter 10 verses 19 to 20 therefore brethren since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which he inaugurated for us through the veil and that is his body which was broken on the cross the veil because his body was broken the veil has been opened and we have the new way not in the shadows but in reality in heaven itself this is why the curtain of the temple was torn apart from top to bottom as soon as

Jesus died so what was happening there was this the way to the holy of holies in heavenly temple was being opened for sinful man by the work of Christ in heaven and the sin has been displayed in its shadow shadow in shadow in other in other words is being revealed in the shadow when the curtain of the temple was torn apart from top to bottom what was happening in heaven has been shown in its shadow so it seems like they are synchronized God showed that his wrath has been appeased and justice has been done and it is all the work of Christ who did this in this way Christ prepared or opened the way to the

Father no other gods or prophets of the other religion accomplishes the work of salvation but Christ Jesus alone did and this is precisely why no one comes to the Father except but by Jesus no one comes to the Father but by me and this is also precisely why there is no salvation in there is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved Christ atoning sacrifice on the cross prepared the way to the heaven he not only showed the absolute way to God's house but also prepared the place for his church not only showing but preparing the place he is taking the initiative the renaissance opened up the new ways for ideas knowledge and discoveries in 15th century

Europe people began to make maps and new lands and began to build ships to explore places they had never visited before Christopher Columbus an Italian explorer and navigator was born at the bosom of the renaissance he completed four challenging voyages across the Atlantic ocean in his lifetime he is believed to have discovered America with many difficulties and troublesome voyage he prepared the way for the world to explore America Columbus the new land to the world however Jesus not only showed the world the way to heaven but also promised to come back and take his disciples there so that they could explore heaven they could see heaven they could enjoy in heaven and they could see and take delight in heaven not only preparing but taking initiative in other words

[27 : 37] Columbus drew the map to the new land but Christ not only drew the way to the father but prepared the eternal home in Emmanuel's land Jesus having revealed his identity as the way the truth and the life continued to unveil his other identity he said if you had known me you would have known my father also from now on you do know him and have seen him and here again disciples they did not understand what Jesus said and at this Philip interrupted Jesus saying Lord so was the father and it is sufficient or enough for us what Philip was pleading to Jesus was to show a theophany a visible manifestation of father's glory like

Moses saw Philip is saying Lord so was the glory like Moses saw so was the father he longed to see more full vision and revelation of God's glory being and in this case Philip asked him to show the greater God but Jesus rebuked him and at the same time greatly startled him by revealing the union the oneness and equality with the father not only in function but in being and that's the greatest reality that's the marvelous revelation in this word

Jesus said have I been with you so long and you still do not know me Philip whoever has seen me has seen the father how can you say so ask the father do you not believe that I am in the father and the father is in me the words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority but the father who dwells in me does his words believe me that I am in the father and the father is in me or else believe on account of the words themselves Jesus is saying that whoever has sinned the father has sinned me because he is the visible manifestation of God on earth and there is a union there is an intimate union between the father and the son the oneness and the equality not only that this chapter is full of the claim of divinity

Jesus claim to be divine at least there are four instances Jesus claimed to be God in this chapter first one in verse two Jesus said believe in God believe also in me if Jesus had been the great prophet he must not and he should not tell his disciples to trust in him Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel and Daniel never told people to believe in them Jesus here is definitely claiming to be divine secondly Jesus said I am the way the truth and I am is the divine name revealed to Moses when God said to Moses I am who I am thirdly in verse 7 Jesus addressed God as his father remember earlier the

Jews accused Jesus for this reason because they thought he is addressing God as his father that means he is making himself equal with God when he called God as his father in John chapter 5 verse 18 for this reason they the Jews tries all the more to kill him not only was he breaking the sabbath but he was even calling God his own father making himself equal with God so Jesus claimed to be one and the same kind of the father revealing the genetic identity with the father and that's the Greek word monogenes if you know Greek that's the word that one and the same kind not a similar kind one and the same kind and finally in responding Philip question Jesus is the incarnation of

[32 : 59] God's presence on earth he is the visible manifestation of God the image the expression the glory reflection and representation of the father so the divine glory which Moses saw partly on Mount Sinai was revealed fully in Jesus precisely this is why Jesus is to see to see Jesus is to see the father what Philip and other disciples were seeing is none other than God in flesh Christian we never make Jesus God we never deify him we believe what he had claimed in his holy scripture many people said that we deify Jesus in fourth century in the council we made Jesus God but here it is the claim we believe that Jesus claimed himself to be God and this is the wonderful that he said whoever has seen the father has seen me friends you might be moral clever learned highly gifted super talented hospitable charitable kind hearted and jealous for good or you might be coming to church in childhood and practicing

Christianity yet not professed faith in Christ I tell you my friends these virtues are impossible to save you for they do not meet God's standard unless you trust in Jesus the path to heaven won't open for you because Jesus is the only one who opens the way and unless you believe in him unless you move and go take that way you will never reach to heaven remember Jesus is preparing a place for his bride who is betrothed to him not for everyone if you are not betrothed to Jesus he is not his bridegroom and he will not take you to his father's house tonight is the opportunity to profess Jesus as your bridegroom tonight is the opportunity to enter into the marriage covenant with him if you do so he will come and get you to eternal home and he himself had promised in as he himself had promised in

John 6 14 he said like this for for for this is the will of my father that everyone who looks on to the son and believes in him shall have eternal life and remember and I will resurrect him up on the last day Jesus has not only prepared the way but he had prepared a place for you he had prepared the place way and prepared the place for everyone who believe if you believe in Jesus you have the way to heaven if you don't you don't have the way to God if you believe in Jesus as your atoning sacrifice then you are on the right way to heaven but if you don't then as Jesus said in John 8 24 to the

Pharisees like those who didn't believe Jesus to be the way those who didn't believe Jesus as divine Jesus said like this in John 8 24 you will die in your sins for unless you believe that I am you will die in your sins I read about two old women who wrote their personal experiences as they were dying one was a Christian woman who truly believed Jesus as her personal Lord and Savior and other was not one had entered through the door of cross and was heading towards the presence of God while other had shut the door of salvation and sadly heading towards destruction they wrote this as they were dying the

Christian woman experienced the light in her heart getting brighter and brighter as she was close to heaven on the other hand other lady experienced the darkness in her heart getting darker and darker as she was dying in her disbelief and sin tonight if you believe Jesus you are on the way tonight if you believe in him that you have assurance of salvation he will come and take you home let us pray father we thank you for sending your son as our way the life and the truth we thank you for he has revealed his glory and he had made a covenant marriage covenant with us and he had shed his own blood on the cross to purchase us lord we marvel what

[38 : 59] Jesus has done it was really costly for him it was not easy but he did for our sake because he was moved by the love for his bride we thank you lord help us to be set apart for for our bridegroom the christ who will come one day who will resurrect us and who will take us home lord you you you reveal this truth to those who haven't put their faith in Jesus who haven't believed Jesus as their bride groom lord you reveal this and you help them to know that their way might be prepared and their place may be secure in heaven lord we long to see on that day many people being saved and many people dwelling in heaven because you are preparing a place for us what a love and concern you have that you came from your father's house to touch untouchable like us people who have no hope but you came and made your bright and united us with you lord we thank you for this time of fellowship and the words that you have given us help us and forgive our many sins lord we ask all this in jesus name and for his sake amen we shall conclude by singing to psalm 62 psalm 62 verse 5 to verse 8 my soul wait thou with patience upon thy

God alone on him dependeth all my hope and expectation he alone my salvation is and my strong rock is he he alone is my sure defense I shall not be moved I shall not move it be let us sing Skern My soul, may thou with patience upon thy God alone.

On him dependeth all my hope and expectation.

See, only my salvation is and my strong rock is he.

He only is my sure defense. I shall not move and be.

[42 : 21] In all my glory place it is and my salvation choose.

In God the rock is of my strength my refuge most secure.

Ye people, place your confidence in him continually.

Before him pour ye out your heart. God is our refuge high.

Amen. The grace of Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.

[43 : 38] Myrrhe pas.■